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05/10/2011 Approved Minutes

Vision 2020 Diversity Task Group (DTG)
Minutes of May 10, 2011 meeting
Approved at the June 13, 2011 meeting

Present: Betty Athanasoulas, Alberto Guzman, Mary Harrison, Jane Howard, David Landskov, Kaitlyn O'Connell (co-chair), April Ranck

Kaitlyn expressed a concern that the override vote might raise issues of civil discourse, given the tone of comments in the Herald, Facebook page, and Arlington List. There was a sense that the media is polarizing the issue. However, Jane reported that the override team is making sure the message is accurate and without a lot of hyperbole. The anticipated tax increase per household is about \$450.

The Superintendent's Coffee Social served 15 job seekers interested in working in Arlington schools as administrators, staff, or teachers. The schools are waiting for the override vote before hiring. The number of teachers of color is improving.

Kaitlyn said a few people interested in DTG have been added to the task group mailing list.

Outreach to Spanish speaking Arlington residents will be a project for this summer. The purpose is to welcome people and increase their comfort as residents. DTG needs a small group to brainstorm ideas for outreach and creation of Spanish language materials. Initial work will be identification of the percent of Spanish speakers in Arlington. There are 88 children at Thompson School whose first language is not English. Kaitlyn will find out how many of these children are Spanish speakers. Betty suggested DTG learn how active parents are in the schools, as that can be a clue to how comfortable they feel and how invested in the child's education. It was noted that families with children make up only 20% of Arlington's population.

April, Alberto and Betty told us about their planned international film festival on October 6-9, 2011, at the Regent Theater. They envision showing foreign films and Arlington high school student films. The series would show films and have discussion panels comprised of filmmakers, producers, academics with expertise in a subject area.

Town Day will be Saturday, September 17.
Final DTG meeting before Fall is June 13 at the Jefferson Cutter House.